

What is claimed is:

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1. A method of processing search results obtained in response to a  
user query, the method comprising:  
providing document pointers returned by a search engine to  
identify a source from which documents are available;  
generating at least two visual abstracts for one of said documents,  
each of said visual abstracts being of a different size; and  
formatting a stream of data such that when said data is displayed  
on a display screen regarding said one of said documents, a smaller one of said  
visual abstracts appears adjacent to a corresponding search result.

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2. The method of claim 1, wherein said visual abstract is generated by  
manipulating said document so as to enhance said visibility of at least a portion of  
said document while degrading visibility of at least another portion of said  
document.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said manipulating is performed by  
filtering said document.

1 4. The method of claim 3, wherein said filtering is performed on an  
2 image in said document.

1 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a larger one  
2 of said visual abstracts on said display screen when requested by said user.

1 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising storing data relating to  
2 said larger one of said visual abstracts.

1 7. The method of claim 5, wherein said larger one of said visual  
2 abstracts is displayed on said display screen when a cursor is moved over said  
3 smaller one of said visual abstracts.

1 8. The method of claim 7, further comprising removing said larger  
2 one of said visual abstracts from said display screen.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein said larger one of said visual  
2 abstracts is removed from said display screen when said cursor is moved away  
3 from said smaller one of said visual abstracts.

[illegible]

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising creating a larger visual abstract of one of said documents.

1           13.     The method of claim 11, further comprising displaying said larger  
2     one of said visual abstracts on said display screen on demand.

1 14. The method of claim 13, wherein said larger one of said visual  
2 abstracts is displayed on said display screen when a cursor is moved over said  
3 smaller one of said visual abstracts.

1 15. The method of claim 13, further comprising removing said larger  
2 one of said visual abstracts from said display screen.

1 16. The method of claim 15, wherein said larger one of said visual  
2 abstracts is removed from said display screen when said cursor is moved away  
3 from said smaller one of said visual abstracts.

1 17. The method of claim 10, wherein said manipulating is performed  
2 by filtering said source document.

1 18. The method of claim 17, wherein said filtering is performed on an  
2 image in said source document.

1 19. The method of claim 10, wherein said first portion of said source  
2 document corresponds to one of a title and a heading of said source document.

1 20. The method of claim 19, wherein said one of said title and said  
2 heading is enlarged as compared with said second portion of said source  
3 document.

1 21. The method of claim 10, wherein said second portion of said  
2 source document corresponds to a body of text of said source document.

1 22. A method of searching for a document, said method comprising:  
2 supplying a search request;  
3 providing abstracts of documents on a screen display that  
4 correspond to said search request, said abstracts including a written summary and  
5 a first visual abstract of each of said documents;  
6 creating a second visual abstract of one of said documents, wherein  
7 said second visual abstract is larger than said first visual abstract; and  
8 displaying said second visual abstract when requested by a user.

1 23. The method of claim 22, wherein said visual abstract is created by  
2 manipulating a source document so as to enhance visibility of at least a first  
3 portion of said source document.

1 24. The method of claim 23, wherein said first portion corresponds to  
2 one of a title and a heading of said document.

1 25. The method of claim 22, wherein said second visual abstract is  
2 displayed on said display screen when said user moves a pointing device over a  
3 corresponding one of said first visual abstracts.

1 26. The method of claim 25, further comprising removing said second  
2 visual abstract from said display screen when said user moves said pointing  
3 device away from said corresponding one of said first visual abstracts.

1 27. The method of claim 22, further comprising storing data relating to  
2 said second visual abstract in a cache database.

1 28. The method of claim 27, further comprising deleting said data  
2 relating to said second visual abstract in said cache database after a predetermined  
3 amount of time.

1 29. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly  
2 embodying a program of instructions executable by said machine to perform

3 method steps for processing search results obtained in response to a user query,  
4 said method comprising:  
5 supplying a search request;  
6 providing abstracts of documents on a screen display that  
7 correspond to said search request, said abstracts including a written summary and  
8 a first visual abstract of said documents;  
9 creating a second visual abstract of one of said documents, wherein  
10 said second visual abstract is larger than said first visual abstract; and  
11 displaying said second visual abstract when requested by a user.

30. A computer system for searching for a document, said system  
comprising:  
3 a client system and a server system, said client system supplying a  
4 search request to said server system, said server system providing abstracts of  
5 documents to said client system, said abstracts corresponding to said search  
6 request, said client system displaying said abstracts on a screen display, said  
7 abstracts including a written abstract and a first visual abstract of each of said  
8 documents, said server system creating a second visual abstract of one of said  
9 documents, said second visual abstract being larger than said first visual abstract  
10 when displayed on said screen display, said client system displaying said second  
11 visual abstract when requested by a user.

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